

## Habitat Conservation

Habitat Conservation	2002 Actual	2003 Estimate	Uncontrol. & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	2004 Budget Request	Changes from 2003 (+/-)
Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (\$\$\$) FTE	36,596 214	29,298 220	+160 0	8,920 25	38,378 245	+9,080 +25
Project Planning (\$\$\$) FTE	30,799 293	30,924 293	+237 0	-1,565 0	29,596 293	-1,328 0
Coastal Program (\$\$\$) FTE	11,299 71	9,668 78	+56 0	-85 0	9,639 78	-29 0
National Wetlands Inventory (\$\$\$) FTE	4,715 39	4,733 39	+31 0	-41 -1	4,723 38	-10 -1
CAM	[2,065]	[TBD]				
<b>Total, Habitat Conservation (\$\$\$) FTE</b>	<b>83,409 617</b>	<b>74,623 630</b>	<b>+390 0</b>	<b>7,229 24</b>	<b>82,336 654</b>	<b>7,713 +24</b>

The Service provides technical assistance regarding fish and wildlife management and habitat restoration to other federal agencies, states, industry, and the public through the Habitat Conservation Program. Through this cooperative program, the Service promotes the conservation of fish and wildlife habitats as Americans develop and utilize the Nation's land and water resources. By working with and providing technical assistance to its partners, the Service safeguards public and environmental health by protecting, and restoring the Nation's natural resources.

The Service's primary habitat conservation tools consist of:

- Forming partnerships for habitat restoration, protection, and conservation.
- Providing habitat planning and technical assistance for natural resource use and extraction.
- Coordinating Service responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act.
- Protecting, restoring and inventorying coastal habitats.
- Inventorying, mapping, and monitoring the nation's wetlands.

Service regional and field office personnel provide project sponsors with on-the-ground assessments of the potential impacts to fish and wildlife habitats resulting from proposed development, including highway construction, gas pipelines, flood control, water delivery systems, and hydropower. They also provide technical assistance to project sponsors in an effort to avoid or minimize these impacts, and work hand-in-hand with communities and private landowners to assist them with natural resource planning, to protect pristine habitat, and to restore degraded habitats such as wetlands, streams, native grasslands and woodlands. Finally, the Service provides the public with high quality and easily accessible information regarding wetlands through its National Wetlands Inventory Program.

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is in the process of developing a new operational performance plan that directly aligns all program activities and objectives with the Secretary's four strategic plan mission components - Resource Protection, Resource Use, Recreation, and Serving Communities. The Service's

operational plan will contain new long-term and annual performance goals and measures to guide the delivery of FWS program implementation, management reform, and budget formulation. The alignment and integration of program performance with budget formulation will provide the context for transparent accountability and the foundation for continual improvement. The Service anticipates completion of a new operational plan by September of 2003.